

Testimony of Hach Boros, RN, MSN, before the Connecticut General
Assembly Public Health Committee
February 28, 2014

**Testimony in support of SB 126, An Act Concerning Children's
Exposure to Chemicals**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and honorable members of the Public Health Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals.

Today I urge your support in moving this bill forward. I am a mother of two small children and a nurse. I feel it is my responsibility to protect my children, and also be an advocate for the health of the public, especially vulnerable populations. I believe that this bill, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals, will begin the process of identifying chemicals of concern in our products. Every parent deserves the right to know what is in the products they use each day. How else can we protect our children, if not through knowledge of the issue?

I am fortunate to have an education and background that helps me identify the concern of this urgent public health issue from toxic chemical exposure. Over the last few decades there is a growing body of research and evidence that there are direct correlations to exposure of chemicals in products and the rise in disease. Specifically, there has been a 20% rise in brain cancer and leukemia in children since 1970. Over the last 20 years women are experiencing 40% more reproductive disorders, causing difficulty conceiving and maintaining a pregnancy. There has been a notable rise in learning and behavioral disorders, including a ten-fold increase in autism spectrum disorder over the last 15 years; and now ADHD affects over 2 million U.S. children as well. Research also shows that asthma, insulin-resistance and diabetes incidence have increased significantly in children. There is no coincidence that the incidence of these diseases and disorders are on the rise when umbilical cord analyses shows that U.S. babies are born with an average of 200 industrial chemicals (found in consumer products). Some of these chemicals are already known to be neurotoxic, carcinogenic and endocrine disrupting.

As a state, as a parent, we would be remiss to ignore these statistics and not look for answers and solutions. This bill is a simple step in the right direction. First of all, it requires the DPH to identify chemicals of concern to children based on the toxicity and exposure hazard. Then the DPH would make recommendations for action to the legislature every 2 years. And, it has NO fiscal impact to the state. However, it could create opportunity for green chemistry and innovation across the state and in the job market. Also, it gives every opportunity to prevent disease and use precaution in our marketplace when it comes to the chemicals we pour into products that have

gone almost completely unregulated. There are over 82,000 chemicals that are unregulated and have mostly not been tested for safety. The federal Toxic Chemicals Substances Control Act has not been updated since 1976.

As healthcare costs rise, it is imperative that some action be taken to address the impact of exposure to toxins on long-term health, especially in children as they are the most vulnerable. Also, financial disparities can limit the choices a person makes when buying any product. So the average citizen is at a great disadvantage to afford products that do not contain toxic chemicals and they are most likely not even aware there is a problem. This is another reason why it is so important that legislation be passed to protect and inform ALL Connecticut citizens from harmful toxins.

My hope is that Connecticut will continue to champion legislation to protect my children and all the children in CT. I want to have the comfort of knowing that the products we use are safe and have no adverse affects on my health, because the state and the department of public health are reviewing the research. Connecticut parents need your help to make the products we purchase and the homes we live in safe and healthy.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and your commitment to the health of Connecticut's residents. I urge your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

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